562 delivery, "her blood was purified to a white color to become
827 the milk of the breast."[8] Nursing a child was the essence
853 of a woman's function, the supremely feminine act. A priest said, "A mother mercifully receives the khwan into her womb, and for maintaining life gives more of her own body, strength, and care (i.e. than does the father). Mothers are born to love children. Theirs is a steady intent to provide children with successful existences. To a mother one is most grateful" (S.S.).

562 In a wider context, not only all their household members
462 but people anywhere were the objects of women's nurture:
252 women were in charge of the cooking even if occasionally
254 helped by men. At the meals they prepared they were often the last to eat, so often "holding back and eating whatever was left over," that in a poor household, short rationing daily was probable (Hauck, et al.:35,[9]). One old lady expressed deep satisfaction that she "did not feel hungry any more." She construed this as proof that she had ample
082 merit, but it also meant that she was a great doner who gave
431 continuously and took little. Women usually offered the
176 early morning food to priests in behalf of the family, and they took charge of cooking the immense amount of food served at large ceremonies and temple festivities. When
593 age pushed women past their mature capacities, they returned
888 to the status of recipients. A son said of his senile mother, "She has gone back to being a child" (klap pai pen dek). The son's wife cooked delicacies for her.

562 A desire to give tender care and nourishment was deemed
857 inborn in all women. Although sex was not strongly
291 differentiated in babyhood,[9] by age 3 a hard-to-handle
593 skirt was put on a tiny girl, who reacted with vast pride. By 5, girls were helping with cooking and baby tending. Often has an older sister of 9 or 12 been observed patiently feeding her charge the ice cream she longed to eat herself.

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822 8. This very phrase was congruent with the colors associated with the khwan. Red or white flags, or pieces of cloth, or puddings (khanom) were required wherever khwan were involved, such as in rice, san phra phûm, and tham khwan ceremonies. Red was an auspicious color, white symbolized innocence and purity.

856 9. Anuman Rajadhon reports, though, that at the moment of birth, the child's sex was immediately "adjusted" (Anuman Rajadhon:127).

would not come willingly to work. When a family with a reputation for stinginess diluted the (3)khaaw (3)tom too much, the group refused to eat any, thereby reminding the host of his obligation for hospitality.

Guests to whom meals were served fell into four categories: 1) kin, 2) visiting dignitaries, 3) priests and 4) drinking companions. Kinfolk who came as guests were married children, or those who were away at school or work, or kinsmen from Bangkok or elsewhere. The older the relative or the greater the distance travelled, the greater the honor accorded him. Foods were exchanged. Two visiting ladies travelling in a large boat, made an annual round of all their relatives, bringing certain "city" foods and receiving substantial gifts of rice, fish and fruit. They stayed for several days as guests of one family, then moved on. Every person from Bang Chan who visited a relative in Bangkok carried big packages of food, usually rice or eggs, as gifts. With the inflated prices in Bangkok, it was advantageous to have a "country cousin" who might bring food. Visiting kinsmen always recognised the need for eventual reciprocity.

Visiting dignitaries were usually entertained by hamlet headmen. Meals served to visiting officials, policemen and others might be elaborate, involving cooperative help in preparation, but reciprocity, if any, rarely took the form of a return meal.

Regular visits of the priests, as well as the invitation of priests to the house for special events, have been mentioned. Priests might also come from afar, usually staying at the temple but receiving generous offerings of food from people of the community.

The custom of convivial get-togethers of either or both sexes was well established. Men traditionally enjoyed "stag" dinners of four up to twenty or more whenever the ingredients for a turtle, frog, cobra or other snake curry were available. Chicken curry might also be thus served, and once a catfish mash was prepared by a male visitor from the north. These curries were cooked by men, and the host served liquor freely. The all-male character of the occasion reflected the old restrictions on women's partaking of flesh foods (see p. 42), but older women did not hesitate to join in the drinking. Women also got together in drinking parties, sometimes to play cards.

In addition to sharing food with people in these four categories, the general rules of hospitality required that anyone who came to the house at meal time, should be offered food, or at least a drink of liquor, tea, or plain water.

people did not want to spend much on a baby, therefore they said that if a child ate too much "with-rice" he would be pot-bellied but thin in the upper part of the body, and that eating eggs would cause dental caries. This grandfather said he believed the truth to be just the opposite, but that goods things were expensive. As an illustration of the idea that thrift was the basis of restriction of "with-rice," one young mother said that an egg was regarded as equivalent to one (1)plaa (1)thuu (fish), and was enough for two persons. Sometimes one egg would serve an entire family. She said that a child would be punished if he ate a whole egg at a meal.

Secondly, Chutima suggests that particular foods were associated with, or suitable for, particular age levels, and a given sex. Data obtained in Bang Chan indicate that certain foods were associated with conditions such as pregnancy, lactation, and the puerperium, with occupation, and even socio-economic levels. For infants, breast milk was considered most suitable. The newborn infant was not usually put to the mother's breast for about 3 days after birth, and if a relative or neighbor did not nurse the infant, the small banana called (3)kluaj (4)nam-(4)waa (see p. 46), raw or baked, was crushed and fed to him before his mother's milk was available. This banana and rice, as (3)khaaw (3)tom and (3)khaaw (2)piag (two watery preparations), sometimes crushed with (3)kluaj (4)nam-(4)waa, were always the first solid foods introduced while the infant was breast fed. No other foods were introduced early. Some infants received fish and egg by 6 months of age, and a majority ate these foods by the time they were a year old. Some two year olds had not yet been given vegetables, and very few infants ate them before they were one year old.

Giving of "holy food"[1] to children suggests concern for strengthening children through dietary as well as other ritual means.

At the other end of life, as old age approached, the diet was supposed to change, ideally to a completely vegetarian one. Since one was soon to face death, one gave up eating meat and even fish, if possible, so as to avoid taking life. It was considered pitiful or wrong for an old person to fish. Being able to go without food was associated with merit. Those who stayed overnight at the temple on the Buddhist holy day went without solid food from before noon until the next morning as the priests did. One elderly woman remarked that when she stayed overnight at the temple she did not feel hungry, and did not eat anything at night, but other women, feeling hungry, drank coffee or milk at night. She

1. See p. 50.

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understood that her merit helped her not to be hungry. Once she asked an eminent layman about eating at night. He said, "If you are not hungry, do not eat. If you feel hungry, it is better to eat. If someone invites you to eat, it is sinful to refuse."

Even young adults had a strong revulsion against gluttony. One of the symptoms of a man who went mad and had to be committed to an institution was that "he ate too much." A woman was despised because "she ate in secret. She stole eggs from her husband, sold them in the market, and then spent the cash on food which she ate there, instead of bringing it home." Definitions of a glutton were, "A 'with-rice' eater," or simply as "one who eats alone." These comments highlight the counsels of eating in moderation and in company. On the other hand, a full stomach was valued for "home is where one eats one's fill."

At maturity, when farm and other tasks were shared as equals, men and women ate almost the same food. The old proscription against animal food for women was somewhat relaxed, but not entirely. To sustain farmers during the seasons of hard work, however, extra quantities of rice and rice alone, were considered essential. "With-rice" was pleasant but not so necessary. Any shift away from a diet of rice as ordinarily cooked in Bang Chan[1] was construed as a shift either in occupation or in health. For example an eminent citizen who gave up farming took to eating (3)khaaw (3)tom often. This soupy rice, a staple dish for infant feeding, had interesting socio-economic connotations. It was served as a light lunch to cooperative farm-workers to be followed at the day's end by a real meal. It was also "delicate" food, suitable for the sick, for city-people, for those who did not toil with their hands and backs. Consequently, when this man ate this "delicate food" more often, he was consciously or unconsciously serving notice on the community that he was not going to do farm work any more, for (3)khaaw (3)tom could not possibly have sustained a farmer's strength. Caustic villagers hinted that he was putting on airs.

Among conditions in which some change from the usual diet was found were pregnancy, post parturition and lactation. Relatively few foods were generally considered to be tabooed under any of these conditions, but many women preferred to limit intake to "safe" foods if there were any possibility that certain foods might cause harm.

Information was obtained from 42 mothers about the food they ate during the post-partum rest period. Two said they ate as usual, but for the remainder, the diet was considerably

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1. Literally "beautiful rice." For method of cooking, see p. 33.

the priests had finished[1]. The trays of food from which each guest served himself were bountiful, but it was not proper to eat very heartily, lest the host suffer the shame of running out of food. If there were a dramatic show or movie at night it was open to the public. In one case 2000 people attended. At that time eight commercial venders turned up to sell coffee, soft drinks, ices and other foods. Venders came to every large ceremony, and were heavily patronized. At the end of a (1)ngaan, the sponsors felt satisfaction and security. Where there was plenty of food to take home, the success was even greater. An earthy compliment was, "the fields were full of feces."

In addition to the banquet were ceremonial offerings of food to spirits and ritual food sometimes consumed as a sacrament. For each ceremony, appropriate selections were made from a specific list: a cooked pig's head, or at least a slice of cooked pork; two kinds of sweetmeats, red ((2)kha-(5)nom (3)tom (1)deeng) and white ((2)kha-(5)nom (3)tom (5)khaaw); a cooked fish, usually (1)plaa (3)chaamun, with its head and tail; a green coconut with its coconut water; a bunch of bananas either of the (3)kluaj (4)nam-(4)waa or (3)kluaj (4)nam varieties; a hard-boiled egg, usually duck; and liquor.[2] Other kinds of sweets, fruit, sugar cane, items for betel chewing, chicken, salt, and rice might appear. As these ceremonies were thought to be suspicious, purifying, therapeutic and protective, they were most elaborate at the great (1)than-(1)khwan (soul-strengthening) ceremony, at house-raisings and at rites to local guardian spirits. The necessity of these ceremonies explains why when public structures were raised, a portion of the public funds were used for a repast. In Bang Chan when donations for a new school

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1. Other priorities in service might be observed; for example, at a celebration preceding ordination the priest-candidates were served next. At one small affair, when 11 priests came to a home to conduct a service for a disabled old man who could not go to the temple, this elder was served after the priests, then the research group who counted as visiting dignitaries, and finally the other family members, with the women who prepared the food, and the children, eating last. The general sequence prescribed by etiquette was: priests should be served before anyone else, old before the young, the males before females, persons with high status such as teachers and ceremonialists before low, urban before rural. Those who cooked and served came last of all. When the number of participants was large, guests might be served, as they arrived, over a period of hours.

2. The presence of meat, fish and alcohol in this ceremonial food reflected non-Buddhist elements in Thai culture, and should not be viewed as a gross violation of Buddhist precepts.

178 592 621 the family members we were informed that A's daughter and her four children had moved out of the village separately to different places which could not be traced, while B's brother and sister went to live with a relative in Lam-loogga, also a rice growing village some fifteen miles to the north. The two chief bread winners of the family, A's husband and B's father, managed successfully to get themselves ordained and are now residing in the village temple. Early in 1953 B went to live with her relatives in Lam-loogga, leaving the sick old grandmother alone in Bangchan. [792] [828] The arrangement was that the old woman was to quit the old shack and take refuge in the secular part of the temple where it would be possible for her ex-husband, now a priest, to have two meals delivered to her every day. Just before the 1953 census was taken, however, she was taken to Lam-loogga. The last member of the disintegrating family was thus left out of the 1953 census.

178 592 587 736 621 Case 2: After the death of his first wife, an old man in BC4 gave his two sons equal shares of his property. He then acquired a second wife and built a separate quarter apart from the main building, thus creating a new family of two. In 1952 he was fatally hit by a truck on the Rinburi road. After a few months of unhappy stay with one of her step sons, the widow acquired a new husband and moved out to a neighboring village.

178 592 621 [166] Case 3: There was in BC4 a laboring family of three consisting of an old man, his daughter, and her son. After